

# The District 3 Slate

July 2000

County Supervisor Pam Slater

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-- Supervisor Pam Slater



County Supervisor  
**Pam Slater**

Dear friend:

Let me share with you some facts that make it important that we address the issues of seniors:

\* During most of recorded human history, only 1 in 10 people could expect to live to the age of 65. Today, nearly 80 percent of Americans will live to be past that age.

\* This year, about 76 million Americans will be older than 50. This is exactly the total number of Americans that were living in the year 1900.

\* Every day there are 5,200 U.S. citizens who celebrate their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. In San Diego County, the 65+ population (332,000) is greater than the older adult populations of 17 states.

I place a high priority on the seniors issues. It's why I co-hosted two Aging Summits, so that we can develop regional solutions to the problems faced by this growing and important segment of our population.

*Pam Slater*

## Supervisors help to keep seniors on the go

The County Board of Supervisors has decided to seek innovative ideas on how to solve the transportation problems of our senior citizens.

Using funding identified by Supervisors Pam Slater and Dianne Jacob, county staff will invite companies and the public to propose projects that will demonstrate how to solve the special needs of older individuals.

"At the Aging Summits, one problem often noted was the unique transportation needs for seniors," Slater said. "When seniors are able to travel about in our communities, they are more active and involved. If not, they'll stay homebound."

For the past several months, the county's Aging and Independence Services agency has gathered information about transportation for our county's seniors and disabled people. A survey was completed earlier this year.

The report suggested a widening gap between the available resources and the potential level of demand for transportation.

Seniors often have unique transportation needs that aren't met by existing public or private transportation. The needs include transit for people with disabilities, long-distance medical trips, door-to-door assistance,



**Headed in the right direction:** Senior "Transit Buddy" Anne Nelson, left, helps Mardell Anderson figure out the best time to take her local bus.

dial-a-rides or escorted trips.

"It's clear we must find ways to add to our existing transportation services," Slater said. "But they need to remain affordable

for seniors, who often live on a fixed income."

The Board of Supervisors set aside \$1,030,000 in seed money

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## The good works of our Aging & Independence Services

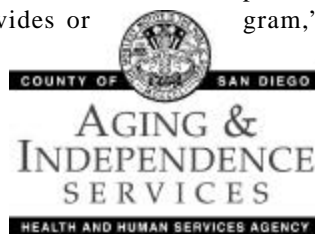
The county's Aging & Independence Services is the agency that provides or contracts for most social services for older people. AIS's Call Center (1-800-510-2020) provides information and helps callers to find the most appropriate service or community resource.

"The best-known service for

older people in the county is probably the meals program," said Supervisor Pam Slater. "It serves about 900,000 meals annually in senior dining centers and delivers about 410,000

meals to homebound elderly." AIS provides in-home aides for thousands of clients through

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### The staff of Supervisor Pam Slater

John Weil, Chief of Staff

Sachiko Kohatsu (Land Use); Robert Duckett (Criminal Justice);  
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# District Attorney unit targets abuse against senior citizens

Dolores was a small, 80-year-old woman. Her mistake was allowing her drug-abusing daughter, Melanie, to live with her.

Melanie hooked up with a contractor, and together they stole about \$40,000 of Dolores' money and left her dirty and dehydrated on a mattress. Melanie ultimately served four years in state prison on various charges, including elder abuse.

As the senior population increases, the problem of elder abuse will likely increase. It is one reason why San Diego County created an elder abuse prosecution unit.

"District Attorney Paul Pfingst and this Board of Supervisors have really taken a lead-

## Joslyn Senior Center gets \$

County Supervisor Pam Slater has announced that she has allocated \$20,000 in funding for the Joslyn Senior Center in Rancho Bernardo.

The funds will be used to enclose a patio area so that it may be used for activities by the center's members.

"I'm pleased to be able to meet this need for seniors in Rancho Bernardo," Slater said.

ership role in prosecuting and preventing elder abuse," said Supervisor Pam Slater.

The DA's elder abuse prosecution unit, headed by Deputy DA Paul Greenwood, began in January 1996. It has prosecuted roughly 250 felony cases of either physical or financial abuse.

"Because of embarrassment or fear, this is a crime that often is unreported," Slater said.

Anyone who suspects elder abuse, whether physical or financial, should call the 24-hour-a-day county Elder Abuse Hotline at 1-800-510-2020. All calls are confidential. Cases are investigated by social workers.

## Transit: New ideas sought

for demonstration projects around the county.

A Request for Proposal will be available this month, with proposals due near the end of August. Grants to any one bidder will be available up to \$75,000 per year for two years. AIS expects to make eight to 10 awards.

"We hope the creative minds in our communities can devise innovative solutions to reliably transport seniors where they need to go," Slater said.



## Spotlight on Senior Summit

The county's second Aging Summit took place last February, as elected officials and community leaders gathered to develop solutions to the problems faced by county's seniors. Above, Supervisor Pam Slater discusses improving services to seniors.

## AIS: Varied programs offered

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), plus case management through such programs as Linkages, MSSP (Multipurpose Senior Services Program) and MASH (Management and Assessment of Social and Health Needs).

Another very popular program offering creative and enriching opportunities in education is the OASIS centers (at North County Fair and at the Mission Valley Center). About 25,000 older adults are registered and participate in challenging programs in the arts, humanities, wellness and volunteer service.

Other important programs provide protection and advocacy such as the Senior Legal Services, HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program), or the Ombudsman, which offers mediation for nursing home residents.

Adult Protective Services investigate all kinds of abuse against older persons, as well as cases of self-neglect.

Project CARE offers a safety net that provides early warning of distress by relying on neighborhood workers.

All of these services are provided free to county residents.

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